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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland
SUBJECT Evidences of Resistance to the Regime

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1. There are evidences of resistance to the regime in Poland, and I think the resistance is spontaneous, unorganized and general. People simply can't live under the Communist exploitation. I mean by that -- economic exploitation.
2. I have the following figures as of the beginning of 1953, which are still valid. To buy one egg, a skilled worker has to work one hour. To buy a pound of flour he has to work 45 minutes. To buy a pound of sugar, two hours; a pound of ham, four hours. You can't expect people to be happy under conditions like that. Of course, they hate the Communists but they resist, not because people who rule over them are Communists, but because they can't live under present conditions. The resistance is widespread because everybody is suffering under that system of exploitation. Through an error they admitted in a Communist paper that in 1948 an unskilled worker earned enough to buy one kg of butter for his daily wage. At the end of 1952 the same unskilled worker could buy for his daily wage only 300 grms butter which is about ten oz on the free market. During four years the workers' wages fell to 30 per cent of what they were four years ago, in purchasing power. That is the admission of the Communist press. People must resist. They can't live on this system. On the whole, I should say that the picture is this--there are many loopholes in the Communist administration.
3. Communism in Poland is several years behind the USSR. They started it in the USSR in 1917 and in Poland in 1948. There are several loopholes in their laws and administration, and the people tell each other what the loopholes are. After two or three years time, the authorities discover what the workers and peasants are doing and then they mend the loophole. Then the people look for another. They have a system of socialist competition. In September 1947 in Lodz - the biggest textile industrial center - they told the workers from now on they had to operate four looms per worker instead of two. In nine mills the workers struck in 1947, and 40 thousand went into the streets. Most of them were very young people. Many of them had been members of the Communist League of Youth. After about ten days the Communist police succeeded in breaking the

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strike. People were killed, and the workers decided it was useless to embark on strikes. The police are too strong. Even so, in 1951 we had sit-down strikes in the Polish coal mining industries in Debrzyn/sic/, the stronghold for the Communist Party. The workers found a notice on the board in March 1951, requiring them to work one hour per day longer. They went to work and after the shift was over they decided to stay down in the pit and start a sit down strike. Again the police succeeded in breaking the strikes. No one was killed. Again it was useless to embark on strikes, but it was a token protest. The next experience was absenteeism. The workers who had to work very hard simply could not afford to strike, but if they left their work for a few days they could earn something, as they call it, on the side. This work on the side brought better pay.

4. Pstrowski started the Stakhanovite movement in Poland in 1947. After some time he died from exhaustion and overwork. Among the miners there is still a saying "work like Pstrowski and meet your maker." This absenteeism became such a severe problem that the government made a decree in 1951, according to which a worker who is absent during four consecutive days or four days during a single year was to be punished by cutting off his wages up to 25 per cent for a period of six months. They made show trials but it could not be effective. If it was to be effective they had to punish nearly all the workers. So they tried something else. They started a drive to have the wages for labor put on the basis of piecework. They started this at the beginning of 1953 and in the middle of 1953 (May 10) they started another drive towards putting many of the wages and production norms on piecework. Practically everything is now done as piecework, not as day work, because it is much easier to exploit the workers that way.
5. Q. Are there any incentive programs on piecework? Extra pay? Rewards?
 A. If you work harder, you earn more. But after some time they say you have reached the peak. Experience has proved that the present norm of production is too low, because all you manage to produce is 200, 250 or 300 per cent of the norm. What has been two hundred per cent now becomes one hundred per cent and wages are revised accordingly. Now they plan for every branch of industry and every enterprise a certain amount of money which they call a fund of wages. If that fund is overdrawn, then they revise the production norms and the wages. Two branches of industries with a record of most strikes were the building trade and the mechanical industry. So they started revising production and wages last May, in those two branches. The eventual aim is to create similar conditions of labor and similar wages in all factories of the same branch of industry. If a worker leaves a factory and goes from the southern part of Poland to the north of Poland it would not help him because the wages are the same.
6. Q. After this incentive program, increase pay, then lowering the norm, I should think a laborer would be rather reluctant to try for an extra dollar or two the next time. Are the workers gullible enough to do the same thing over again?
 A. There is a battle between the management plus Communist Party, Party unions, and the workers. It started in 1951 and it is now 1954 and the battle is not yet over. On the 10th of May 1953 the Communist started a drive to get similar conditions of labor and similar wages in all factories in every branch of industry all over the country. On the whole it can be said the workers are losing. There is a different kind of resistance in the coal mining industry.
7. In every coal mine, work councils are elected by the workers which form a section of the trade union machinery. It is an office elected by the workers of the factory. The workers refused to be elected members of the work council, because the work council is a part of the Communist machinery and the other workers don't like their colleagues who are on the councils. Being good

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colleagues, people refused to agree to be put forward as candidates to the works council. In many places the Communists had difficulty to get a work council together. This is another kind of resistance. The Communists started a movement for Workers' Recreations. They got holidays at home or at the sea or mountains. They have the opportunity to get a holiday with pay. Now you can spend it in a fashionable spa. This was in 1951 that 566,000 workers took part. In 1952 only 400,000 took part. Naturally it is good to spend the holiday in the mountains but the fact was that all during the holiday they got Communist lectures on the virtues of the Soviet Union and 160,000 workers decided to spend their holidays at home, thus avoiding Communist lectures. The same is true of the press. Practically everybody is compelled to subscribe to the Communist press. The people get it, but they don't read it. Even the leading members of the Communist Party don't read it. There is nothing dramatic in it. That is what they call the guerrilla warfare against the Communists which is going on every place. In 48 per cent of Polish districts, there is not even the smallest Communist cell. After nearly ten years of Communist rule they did not even succeed in establishing a small cell of the Communist Party. In one village the local cell of the Communist Party is composed of eight members, one of them being the local farmer and seven of them being government officials. That is another kind of resistance.

8. Then there is resistance against the kolkhozes. One of the provisions to start a kolkhoz was there must be twelve members. The officials look at the map in Warsaw and find in a certain section there are no kolkhozes. They call the attention of the Communist Party to that and they select a village which according to them would be good to start a kolkhoz, and they send out people. They have a meeting and address the people, telling them to organize a kolkhoz. The peasants say, "This is interesting; we better consult our wives." They scratch their heads and say, "We better wait a little." After some hesitation, two or three people say, "We wish to join." But that is not enough. So the propaganda work must go on. Another few months and two or three others join and after a period of time they found eleven members - but they never found the twelfth. It means that all inhabitants of this village must act as a single body. They say "you will apply to be a member." Three months later another applies. They must work very carefully with each other, because if they get the twelfth foundation member it destroys the whole thing.
9. They just bide their time - but naturally there has been pressure. If they want somebody to join the kolkhoz, you get taxation. Then you get the quotas to be delivered; quotas on meat, milk, corn, livestock. It is up to the local National Council to say "you deliver so much grain and you deliver so much meat, etc.; they demand the impossible and there is no way out for the people. They either join the kolkhoz or flee, which many of them do. There are hundreds of thousands of acres untilled because the peasants flee.
10. a. What becomes of them?
 - A. They go to factories in a distant place and because of the shortage of manpower they may be sure to be accepted for employment.

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